

Erlotinib

Care Team Contact Information: _____

Pharmacy Contact Information: _____

Diagnosis: _____

- This treatment is often used for:
 - Non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC)
 - Pancreatic cancer
- It may also be used for other reasons.
- Your care team may perform a test for certain abnormal EGFR genes to make sure erlotinib is right for you.

Goal of Treatment: _____

- Treatment may continue for a certain time period, until it no longer works, or until side effects are no longer controlled.

Treatment Regimen

Treatment Name	How the Treatment Works	How the Treatment is Given
Erlotinib (er-LOH-tih-nib): Tarceva (tar-SEE-vuh)	Slows down or stops the growth of cancer cells by blocking a specific protein that helps them survive.	Tablets taken by mouth.

Treatment Administration and Schedule

- Erlotinib is sometimes used in combination with other treatments. Talk with your care team about your exact treatment.

Your erlotinib dosing instructions:

- Erlotinib comes in 3 tablet strengths: 25 mg, 100 mg, and 150 mg.
- Take erlotinib 1 time a day around the same time each day.
- Take erlotinib on an empty stomach (at least 1 hour before or 2 hours after eating).
- Swallow erlotinib tablets whole with water. Do not chew, cut, or crush the tablets. If you cannot swallow the tablets whole, tell your care team.
- Do not change your dose or stop taking erlotinib unless your care team tells you to.

Treatment Administration and Schedule (Continued)

- Your care team may tell you to change your dose, temporarily stop, or completely stop taking erlotinib if you develop certain side effects.
- If you vomit after taking a dose of erlotinib, do not take another dose at that time. Wait and take your next dose at your scheduled time.
- If you miss a dose of erlotinib, just skip the dose and then take your next dose at your scheduled time. Do not take an extra dose or 2 doses at one time.
- If you take too much erlotinib, call your care team or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away.

Storage and Handling of Erlotinib

- Store erlotinib at 77°F (25°C). It is okay if erlotinib is temporarily stored between 59°F and 86°F (15°C to 30°C).
- Keep erlotinib and all medicines out of the reach of children and pets.
- People who are or may be pregnant should wear gloves when handling erlotinib.
- Ask your care team how to safely throw away any unused erlotinib.

Appointments: Appointments may include regular check-ups with your care team, lab visits, and imaging tests. It's important to keep your appointments whenever you can. If you miss any appointments, call your care provider as soon as possible to reschedule your appointment.

Supportive Care to Prevent and Treat Side Effects

Description	Supportive Care Taken at Home
To help prevent or treat nausea and vomiting	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
To help lower the risk of rash	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Other	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Common Side Effects

Side Effect	Important Information
Infections	<p>Description: Treatment may increase your chance of getting an infection.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash your hands often and bathe regularly. • Avoid crowded places and close contact with people who are sick. • Keep any catheter/port site clean and dry. Follow all instructions provided by your care team. <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher • Chills • New or worsening cough or sore throat • Painful urination or signs of a urinary infection • Feeling much more tired than usual • Red, swollen, warm, or painful areas on the skin (possible skin infection)
Fatigue	<p>Description: Fatigue is a constant and sometimes strong feeling of tiredness.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine exercise can help reduce fatigue. Talk with your care team to find the right type and amount of activity for you. • Ask family and friends for help with daily tasks and for emotional support. • Try healthy ways to feel better, such as meditation, journaling, yoga, or guided imagery, to reduce anxiety and improve well-being. • Aim for 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night. Limit daytime naps to help you sleep better at night. • Do not drive, operate heavy machinery, or do other potentially dangerous activities if you are very tired. <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tiredness that affects your daily life or prevents you from doing normal activities • Tiredness that does not get better with rest • Dizziness or weakness along with severe tiredness
Nausea and Vomiting	<p>Description: Nausea is an uncomfortable feeling in your stomach or the need to throw up. You may or may not vomit.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat smaller, more frequent meals. • Avoid fatty, fried, spicy, or highly sweet foods. • Eat bland foods at room temperature and drink clear liquids. • If you vomit, start with small sips of water, broth, or other clear liquids. If these stay down, try soft foods (such as gelatin, plain cornstarch pudding, yogurt, strained soup, or strained cooked cereal) and gradually return to solid foods. • Your care team may prescribe medicine for these symptoms. <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vomiting for more than 24 hours • Nonstop vomiting • Signs of dehydration (very thirsty, dry mouth, dizziness, or dark urine) • Blood or coffee-ground-like appearance in your vomit • Severe stomach pain that does not go away after vomiting

<p>Low Appetite</p>	<p>Description: Loss of appetite can lead to weight loss and low energy. Small changes in when and what you eat can help maintain strength and nutrition.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be as active as you can. Do light physical activity before a meal (check with your care team before starting an exercise program). • Note times of day when your appetite is best and eat your largest meal then. • Eat 5–6 small meals or snacks each day. • Choose high-protein foods (beans, chicken, fish, meat, yogurt, tofu, eggs). Eat protein first during meals. • Choose higher-calorie foods (avoid “low-fat,” “fat-free,” or “diet” options when trying to gain/maintain weight). • If you feel full quickly, avoid drinking 30 minutes before a meal and drink liquids between meals; choose calorie-containing drinks rather than diet drinks. • Have a bedtime snack that’s easy to digest (for example, peanut butter and crackers). If you have reflux, wait at least 1 hour before lying down. • Try nutritious beverages (high-protein shakes or smoothies) if solid food is unappealing. • Ask your care team about liquid nutrition supplements and ways to add protein or calories (protein powder, yogurt, ice cream). <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unintentional weight loss • Little or no appetite for several days • Excessive tiredness or low energy
<p>Diarrhea</p>	<p>Description: Diarrhea is loose, watery stools or more frequent bowel movements than usual. It can cause dehydration and weakness.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep track of how often you go to the bathroom each day. • Drink 8 to 10 glasses of water or other fluids daily, unless your care team tells you otherwise. • Eat small meals of mild, low-fiber foods (such as bananas, applesauce, potatoes, chicken, rice, and toast). • If you have diarrhea, avoid high-fiber foods (such as raw vegetables, fruits, and whole grains), gas-producing foods (such as broccoli and beans), dairy (such as milk and yogurt), and spicy, fried, or greasy foods. • Your care team may recommend an antidiarrheal medicine such as loperamide (Imodium). <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 or more bowel movements than normal in 24 hours • Dizziness or lightheadedness while having diarrhea • Signs of dehydration (very thirsty, dry mouth, dizziness, or dark urine) • Bloody diarrhea

<p>Cough</p>	<p>Description: A cough is a reflex action that forcefully expels air from the lungs to clear the airways of irritants or mucus.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell your care team what your cough feels like and when it happens. • Use a humidifier and drink plenty of water. • Keep your house clean by dusting and vacuuming regularly • Avoid exposure to smoke or strong chemicals. • Your care team may recommend medicine for cough. <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trouble breathing • Chest pain or tightness • Coughing up blood
<p>Acne-Like Rash</p>	<p>Description: An acne-like rash is a skin condition. It usually appears on the face, neck, and back, causing red, inflamed bumps that may itch or feel dry.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you get a rash, keep the area clean and dry. • Check with your care team before using any treatments. • Do not use over-the-counter acne treatments like benzoyl peroxide or salicylic acid, or soaps with alcohol. • Wash with a mild, moisturizing soap, and avoid long, hot baths or showers. • After washing, pat your skin dry instead of rubbing. • Oatmeal baths and unscented moisturizers may relieve itching. • Sunlight can worsen symptoms, so avoid sun exposure whenever possible. • Wear long-sleeved clothing with ultraviolet (UV) protection if possible. • Use broad-brimmed hats for added protection. • Apply broad-spectrum sunscreen (UVA/UVB), with sun protective factor (SPF) 30 or higher, as directed. • Use lip balm with SPF 30 or higher. • Avoid tanning beds. • Your care team may recommend or prescribe medicine for rash. <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Painful or worsening rash • Rash that does not improve with treatment

Select Rare Side Effects

Side Effect	Talk to Your Care Team if You Have Any of These Signs or Symptoms
Heart and Blood Vessel Problems (Cardiovascular Events)	<p>Erlotinib can increase the risk of serious, life-threatening heart and blood vessel problems, including heart attack (MI), reduced blood flow to the heart (myocardial ischemia), and stroke (cerebrovascular accident).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chest pain, pressure, or tightness (may spread to arms, back, neck, jaw) • Sudden shortness of breath or trouble breathing • Sudden weakness, numbness, or one-sided facial, arm, or leg droop • Sudden confusion, trouble speaking, or understanding • Sudden vision changes, severe dizziness, or loss of balance • Fainting, sudden severe weakness, or a very fast/irregular heartbeat
Bleeding Problems (Hemorrhage)	<p>Your risk of bleeding may increase if you are taking erlotinib and a blood thinner medicine called warfarin.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blood in your stools or black stools (looks like tar) • Pink or brown urine • Unexpected bleeding, or bleeding that is severe or you cannot control • Vomit blood or vomit that looks like coffee grounds • Cough up blood or blood clots • Increased bruising • Dizziness • Weakness • Confusion • Change in speech • Headache that lasts a long time
Microangiopathic Hemolytic Anemia (MAHA)	<p>MAHA is a serious condition in which damage to small blood vessels causes red blood cells to break apart. When combined with low platelets (thrombocytopenia), you have both anemia and an increased risk of bleeding. This can lead to organ injury, kidney problems, and clotting issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of color in the skin • Extreme tiredness or weakness • Easy bruising or unusual bleeding (nose, mouth, gums) • Decreased urine output or blood in your urine • Swelling of the legs, feet, or ankles (or swelling of face, hands, full body) • Confusion, seizures, or stroke (weakness, numbness, trouble speaking) • New or worsening high blood pressure
Lung Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cough • Shortness of breath • Chest pain
Eye Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry or red eyes • Eye pain or swelling • Vision changes • Increased tears • Sensitivity to light • Blurred vision

<p>Tear in Your Stomach or Intestinal Wall (Perforation)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe pain or tenderness in your stomach area (abdomen) • Swelling of the abdomen • Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher • Chills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nausea • Vomiting • Signs of dehydration (very thirsty, dry mouth, dizziness, or dark urine)
<p>Liver Problems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yellowing of your skin or the white part of your eyes (jaundice) • Severe nausea or vomiting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain on the right side of your stomach area (abdomen) • Dark, tea-colored urine • Bleeding or bruising more easily than normal
<p>Kidney Problems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease in your amount of urine • Blood in your urine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swelling of your ankles • Loss of appetite

Before starting treatment, ask your care team when to call 9-1-1 or seek emergency help. If you experience any new, worsening, or uncontrolled side effects, contact your care team immediately.

Intimacy, Pregnancy, and Breastfeeding

- Treatment may **change how you feel about intimacy and your body**. However, physical closeness—such as holding hands and hugging—remains safe. It is common to have questions about intimacy. If needed, talk to your care team for guidance.
- Treatment may **harm an unborn baby**.
 - If you are able to become pregnant, take a pregnancy test before starting treatment.
 - Use an effective method of birth control during treatment and for 1 month after your last dose of erlotinib.
 - If you think you might be pregnant or if you become pregnant, tell your care team right away.
 - If your partner is able to become pregnant, use an effective method of birth control—such as condoms—during treatment and for 1 month after your last dose of erlotinib.
- **Do NOT breastfeed** during treatment and for 2 weeks after your last dose of erlotinib.

Additional Information

- **Tell your care team about all the medicines you take.**
This includes prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, and herbal products. Before starting any new medicine, supplement, or vaccine, ask your care team first.
- **This Patient Education Sheet may not describe all possible side effects.**
Call your healthcare provider for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

Notes

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Scan the QR code below to access this education sheet.



Important notice: The Association of Cancer Care Centers (ACCC), Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association (HOPA), Network for Collaborative Oncology Development & Advancement, Inc. (NCODA), and Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) have collaborated in gathering information for and developing this patient education guide. This guide represents a brief summary of the medication derived from information provided by the drug manufacturer and other resources.

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